

## MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

October 18, 2011

As the State and local unemployment rate remain extraordinarily high, more County residents continue to look to the County for assistance. Nowhere is this more evident than in the General Relief (GR) Program, where the caseload has nearly doubled from 58,000 in January 2007 to 112,000 in July 2011. Throughout this time period, there has been a strong, direct relationship between the high unemployment rate and the rising GR caseload.

In February 2010, the Board unanimously approved a comprehensive plan to restructure the GR Program. The GR Restructuring Plan focuses on strengthening efforts to assist GR participants with accessing one of the two positive paths for leaving GR: employment or State/Federal disability assistance programs, primarily SSI/SSP. These efforts are already producing positive results: in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11, over 16,000 individuals transitioned-off of GR into jobs and 8,380 individuals transitioned off of GR onto State/Federal disability assistance programs. This increase in positive GR exits has resulted in net County cost (NCC) savings; for example, in FY 2010-11, we received \$16.8 million in Interim Assistance Reimbursement for GR participants approved for SSI, a 29 percent increase from the prior fiscal year.

Notwithstanding the early success of GR Restructuring, we need to consider additional steps to address the high GR caseload and associated NCC expenditures. In this regard, in April 2011, this Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to develop and submit a menu of options to reduce costs for administering the GR Program, and those options were submitted in August. It is now appropriate to review those options to determine which options would increase the integrity of the GR program, reduce fraud, and/or strengthen enforcement of program rules. Though we cannot control the increase in the legitimate need for assistance, we have an obligation to ensure that General Relief is only provided to needy Los Angeles County residents who comply with the rules of the program.

**I, THEREFORE MOVE THAT** the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Officer, the Auditor-Controller, and the Acting Director of Public Social Services to assess the potential of each of the options submitted by the CEO and DPSS in August 2011 to increase GR program integrity, reduce fraud and/or strengthen enforcement of GR program rules, and submit a joint recommendation on whether to adopt any of the options within 90 days.

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